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# Democracy, Security, Peace: American and European Approaches towards Democratization

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Paul Maximilian Bisca

## I. Introduction

Although the ideal of living in a democratic polity has reverberated throughout history at least since the ancient Greeks, it was only in the last decade of the twentieth century that the political climate became propitious for democratic change in most parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the lesson of the early 1990s was that the demise of the Cold War attested to the victory of liberal democracy over totalitarianism and that for millions of people, the door was now open to economic prosperity and political affirmation.<sup>2</sup> This sense of optimism was present in the realms of both policy-making and academia: U.S. President George H.W. Bush stood before Congress and declared his intentions to help forge a New World Order “in which the nations of the world, East and West, North and South, can prosper and live in harmony.”<sup>3</sup> Two years before this speech, Francis Fukuyama had written that the dialectics of history would cease and a democratic peace based on liberal values would result from the struggle between individualism and communism.<sup>4</sup>

Yet, as we well know, from East to West and from North to South, these lofty expectations were hit hard. The Balkans succumbed to a spiral of violence reminiscent of the Second World War. AIDS, genocide, and civil war ravaged parts of Africa and an economic crisis took hold of South Asia and Latin America. Moreover, the attacks of September 11, 2001, introduced the threat of global terrorism. Thus, even though a democratic peace took root in Europe and its promises became a tangi-

ble reality for millions on the continent, a wider perspective shows that the tenets of realism—with its emphasis on anarchy, sovereignty, and national interest—might have possessed greater explanatory power. As a result, the democratic peace thesis could have been perceived with much greater skepticism.

However, faith in democracy was not lost and promoting democracy continued to be a common objective for both the United States and the European Union (EU). In 1990, the Transatlantic Declaration stated that the first goal for the U.S. and the EU (then the European Community) was to “support democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights worldwide.”<sup>5</sup> Five years later, the EU and the U.S. adopted the New Transatlantic Agenda, which reaffirmed this creed and aimed to “seize the opportunity presented by Europe’s historic transformation to consolidate democracy and free-market economies throughout the continent.”<sup>6</sup> Even in 2006, with Iraq war discord still fresh, both the U.S. and the EU agreed that, “the advance of democracy is a strategic priority of our age.”<sup>7</sup>

In spite of this consensus in principle, the practicalities of advancing democracy have proven to be a divisive issue. Far from being the symptoms of an episodic divide, the arguments over Iraq reflect different conceptions of the world and of the role of external agency in enacting political change. The roots of this divergence can be traced back notably to 9/11 and to the distinct conclusions that American and European leaders drew from this event. For U.S. President George W. Bush, the international arena has once again turned into a battleground between the forces of freedom and tyranny, except now “the survival of liberty in our land [America] depends on the success of liberty in other lands.”<sup>8</sup> Hence, promoting democracy by any means goes hand in hand with increasing America’s security. In European eyes, however, the world since September 11 is not necessarily more dangerous but more complex, and the task of promoting democracy must be addressed within the intricate context shaped by the process of globalization.<sup>9</sup>

Whether or not these disagreements will again manifest themselves as profoundly as they did at the United Nations Security Council in 2003 remains to be seen. What is far less elusive is the hypothesis that studying the approaches that the U.S. and EU take towards democratization is a useful way of understanding what factors determine the extent to which their policies may converge or diverge in the future. With this motivation in mind, the purpose of this essay is twofold. On

the one hand, I seek to analyze how the way in which democracy promotion is presented in official American and European security documents differs from the political processes through which democracy is bolstered and advanced. From a methodological perspective, this task faces a serious challenge: while the U.S. is a unitary and coherent actor in global politics, the EU is a fragmented association of states whose policies are simultaneously supra-national (trade), shared (development), and intergovernmental (security). The question arises of what constitutes EU foreign policy? Is it the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) established under Pillar II of the Treaty of Maastricht? Is it the EU's external relations, supervised by the European Commission, or just the foreign policies of member states? Since this essay is concerned with the promotion of democracy as a Union-wide endeavor, focusing on just one domain of EU activity may overlook important efforts that are being pursued in others. Therefore, even though my attention will concentrate primarily on the CFSP, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) and other initiatives will also be taken into consideration.

Secondly, this study is the culmination of my intellectual *parcours* as a participant in the seminar on Globalization in Comparative Perspective, the purpose of which was to explore the many facets of this concept through both experiential learning acquired by living in the United States and Europe, and a rigorous academic engagement. Therefore, part of the rationale behind this project is to underscore how researching the theme of this essay and developing an argument about democracy promotion has contributed to my understanding of globalization.

The essay continues as follows: Section I compares and contrasts the 2006 National Security Strategy of the United States with the European Security Strategy, which was presented to the European Council in 2003 by CFSP special representative Javier Solana. My purpose here is to answer three questions: (a) what are the most serious threats to international peace and security according to each document, (b) how does the promotion of democracy fit within the broader framework of policy recommendations offered to tackle these problems, and (c) in what kind of language are these documents written (do technical terms prevail over ideological formulations or vice-versa)? Section II turns to a case study and explores the policies that the U.S. and EU have adopted towards Hamas since it won the Palestinian municipal and legislative elections in January 2006. This focus is relevant for

two reasons. First, the EU is involved (together with the U.S., Russian Federation and the United Nations) in the Middle East Quartet, thus reflecting a Union-wide effort to contribute to the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Second and most significantly, Hamas' victory is a classical example of the democratic paradox. On the one hand, the Palestinian people voted Hamas into government in free and fair elections; on the other hand, this organization is labeled "terrorist" by both the U.S. and the EU. Hamas explicitly refuses to acknowledge Israel's right to exist and denies the legitimacy of the political agreements signed by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO). All of this makes its agenda incompatible with the principles enumerated in the Quartet's Roadmap to Peace. In this context, my aim is to investigate to what extent the policy prescriptions outlined in the aforementioned documents were implemented and, if they were not, what are the consequences for both the U.S. and EU. Section III combines analysis with reflection in order to bring to light the contradictions of democracy-promotion strategies and offer an evaluation of the U.S. and EU initiatives analyzed in Section II. Finally, in Section IV, the emphasis will be on the specific ways in which my interaction with this subject has enhanced my understanding of globalization. These thoughts shall serve as a general conclusion.

## **II. Two Security Strategies**

Before I begin the comparison between the National Security Strategy of the United States (NSS) and the European Security Strategy (ESS), two points of qualification are required. First, it can be argued that it might have been more useful to treat the NSS and ESS separately in order to highlight more clearly the findings of my analysis conducted in the first semester of the program in the United States and in the second semester in Europe. However, such an approach would have overlooked a crucial aspect, namely, that the development of the ESS was heavily influenced by the original iteration of the NSS in 2002. Consequently, analyzing what these policy frameworks have to say about promoting democracy—the central phenomenon with which this essay is concerned—in relation to one another is an exercise that can lead to much more accurate results.

The reference to the 2002 NSS brings me to my second point. Although in this essay the most recent version of the National Security Strategy takes precedence, a rigorous analysis cannot treat it in isola-

tion from its initial formulation in 2002. The reason is that the 2002 NSS was the first document in which the Bush Administration outlined how it would address the threats America faced post-9/11, and its core assumptions still inform the most recent version.

### **A. Visions of Danger: The NSS and the ESS**

How do American and European policymakers perceive the world at the onset of the new millennium? One may begin by noting that the NSS (both in 2002 and 2006) and the ESS have two radically different historical points of departure. For the NSS, the twentieth century was marked by the confrontation between democracy and totalitarianism, and “ended with the decisive victory of the forces of freedom and a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy and free enterprise.”<sup>10</sup> Consequently, today the United States has a privileged hegemonic position in the international system, which is maintained by faith in the values of a free and open society, but which also implies the exceptional responsibility of defending those principles because they enjoy universal validity.<sup>11</sup> With respect to the threats that the U.S. faces in the wake of 9/11, President Bush declares in his introductory remarks to the 2002 NSS that, “the gravest danger our Nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology.”<sup>12</sup> Specifically, the enemy is terrorism and the struggle against it is perceived as a new kind of existential battle for the United States, which will be fought over an extended period of time.<sup>13</sup> Yet terrorism is far from being a solitary danger. To the contrary, it comes in a triad with rogue regimes and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) because “we must stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to use them against the United States.”<sup>14</sup>

The same sense of great danger and opportunity permeates the 2006 NSS. Writing three years after the war in Iraq begun, the President is unambivalent in his introductory letter about the current state of affairs in the U.S.: “America is at war” and the NSS is “a wartime strategy required by the grave challenge we face: the rise of terrorism, fueled by an aggressive ideology of hatred and murder.”<sup>15</sup> In comparison to its predecessor, the NSS is formulated on the same basic tenets and identifies the same threats, but differs in at least two respects: (1) each section contains a brief progress report with the successes and challenges since 2002, which includes details about Al-Qaeda, Afghanistan, and Iraq; and (2) it addresses a serious shortcoming of the 2002

NSS, namely, that in spite of the “significance attributed to terrorism, there is little [in the document] to actually help the reader understand the nature of the terrorist threat and how it might be addressed.”<sup>16</sup> In contrast, the 2006 version identifies four reasons that explain the rise of global terrorism. Two of them are ideological and refer to (a) the rhetoric of historical injustices, which are constantly revived in order to fuel the thirst for revenge, and (b) the perversion of Islam as a religion in order to justify the killing of innocents. The other two attribute the rise of global terrorism to the lack of democracy, as terrorists are (c) recruited from groups of individuals with no political voice in their societies and (d) belong to socio-political milieus devoid of transparency, since the worldview of the groups that suicide bombers come from is distorted by conspiracy theories and false information.<sup>17</sup>

If the tone and content of the NSS betray the deep sense of alarm caused by the threat of global terrorism, rogue regimes, and weapons of mass destruction, the ESS, while fully cognizant of these dangers, paints a different picture of the world. To begin with, the historical reference point for this document is not the Cold War and the victory of freedom over totalitarianism, but the success story of European integration. Indeed, the first sentence of the ESS proclaims that, “Europe has never been so prosperous, so secure nor so free” and that “the creation of the European Union has been central to this development.”<sup>18</sup> Whereas the NSS credits America’s unparalleled political status in the world to its attachment to democratic values, the ESS focuses on Europe’s unavoidable mission of becoming a more proactive international actor: “As a union of 25 [now 27] states with over 450 million people and a quarter of the world’s GNP, the EU is inevitably a global player” and “should be ready to share in the responsibility for a global security and in building a better world.”<sup>19</sup> Therefore, a critical distinction between the NSS and the ESS is that the former is written in the language of actuality—the U.S. *is* the world’s sole superpower and *must* protect its security—whereas the latter is formulated in the language of potentiality: the EU *should* come to terms with its weight as a top player in the world arena and make its presence felt more strongly.

This point is perhaps best illustrated in the way in which the ESS discusses the main threats to international peace and security. Unlike the NSS, it “acknowledges the existence of threats, but they are portrayed as issues that have to be taken seriously since Europe *could be* confronted by a radical challenge.”<sup>20</sup> Specifically, the sources for these

radical challenges include terrorism, for which Europe serves both as a target and as a base, and the proliferation of WMD, regarded as potentially the greatest threat to the EU's security. The ESS recognizes that, "the most frightening scenario is one in which terrorist groups acquire weapons of mass destruction."<sup>21</sup> Regional conflicts, whether violent or frozen, persist at the Union's borders and threaten it in both direct and indirect ways. Another threat is "state failure," which differs from the American notion of "rogue states," although the same countries are under scrutiny, such as Somalia or Afghanistan under the Taliban. Interestingly enough (and without giving examples), the ESS mentions "a number of states that have placed themselves outside the bounds of international society,"<sup>22</sup> and who are only encouraged to rejoin the international community.<sup>23</sup> A final problem is organized crime, a multifaceted threat that challenges the EU's internal stability.

## **B. Democracy: A Recipe against All Evils?**

America and Europe have prepared different responses for the perils that put their security at risk. For the United States, the antidote against these ills is not difficult to conceive, for if the Cold War ended with the victory of democracy over dictatorship, and if the same battle is being fought now in a different guise, it follows that the only winning answer is a genuine commitment to promote democracy. Indeed, the first paragraph of the 2002 NSS declares that the "values of freedom are right and true for every person, in every society—and the duty of protecting these values against their enemies is the common calling of freedom-loving people across the globe."<sup>24</sup> Based on this assumption, the purpose of American "statecraft is to help create a world of democratic, well-governed states that can meet the needs of their citizens and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system" because doing so is "the best way to provide enduring security for the American people."<sup>25</sup> In other words, the United States embraces the thesis of democratic peace for both idealistic and strategic reasons. According to the 2006 NSS, since "democracies are the most responsible members of the of the international system, promoting democracy is the most effective long-term measure for strengthening international stability; reducing regional conflicts; countering terrorism; and extending peace and prosperity."<sup>26</sup>

Surveying the policy recommendations that the 2006 NSS advocates in order to effectively tackle terrorism is a good way to understand how



this philosophy is to be applied. I mentioned that the document identifies four factors that explain the growing magnitude of this phenomenon. To each of them, the NSS claims that the promotion of democracy offers an effective solution. For instance, in place of political alienation, “democracy offers an ownership stake in society” and “a chance to shape one’s own future.”<sup>27</sup> With respect to conspiracy and misinformation, democracy allows for “freedom of speech and an independent media which can expose and discredit dishonest propaganda.” Regarding the calls for violent revenge against historical injustices and the perversion of Islam to legitimize suicide bombing, “democracy offers the peaceful resolution of disputes and the respect for human dignity that abhors the deliberate targeting of innocent civilians.” Consequently, all the instruments required to fight these evils appear to be embedded in the fabric of democratic societies, which the U.S. seeks to sustain and advance through a variety of means, ranging from public diplomacy to development aid, military assistance, and working within the framework of international organizations.

Before I move on to discuss the ESS, two prescriptions of the NSS should be kept in mind, given their relevance to the purpose of this essay. First, although the document states that “freedom cannot be imposed, but must be chosen,” it qualifies this assertion by noting that while in some cases the U.S. “will lend more quiet support to lay the foundations of freedom,” in others it will “take vocal and visible steps on behalf of *immediate* [my emphasis] change.”<sup>28</sup> Second, both the 2002 and the 2006 NSS documents make specific references to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the former version, it is mentioned that, “there can be no peace for either side without freedom for both sides” and that “America stands committed to an independent and democratic Palestinian state living beside Israel in peace and security.”<sup>29</sup> In the latter document, however, the language is less abstract and the focus is on Hamas’ responsibilities as an elected governing party in the Palestinian territories. Although elections are the most visible sign of a free and democratic society, only a commitment by Hamas to the equality of all citizens, minority rights, civil liberties, and the peaceful resolution of disputes would make it a legitimate political actor. Otherwise, this “government cannot be considered fully democratic, however it might have taken office.”<sup>30</sup> I will return to these points in the following section.

The ESS is less alarmist about the threats to Europe’s security and its remedies are equally reflective of its perceptions. For the U.S., what

is at stake in the fight against terrorism is the survival of democracy in the world, which is synonymous with boosting America's security. The EU, while acknowledging that the line of defense against these new perils will often be abroad, sees no clear-cut answers to these complex and interconnected problems. On the contrary, responding to each threat requires a mixture of various instruments. For example, combating terrorism effectively is impossible without combining "intelligence, police, judicial and other means."<sup>31</sup> Proliferation may be "contained through export controls and attacked through political, economic and other pressures," while simultaneously "tackling the underlying political causes."<sup>32</sup> Most importantly, given that in the era of globalization geography still matters, Europe is concerned with the security of its vicinity. In this regard, the ESS stipulates that, "our task is to promote a ring of well governed countries to the East of the Union and on the borders of the Mediterranean with whom we can enjoy close and cooperative relations."<sup>33</sup> This is a crucial difference with the NSS, which clearly states that, "it is the policy of the United States to seek and support democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world."<sup>34</sup> In contrast, the EU recognizes that, "spreading good governance [and not democracy!], supporting political reform, dealing with corruption and abuse of power, establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights are the best means of strengthening international order."<sup>35</sup> Hence, in this document the EU strives to foster good governance and political reform in order to create a *cordon sanitaire* around its borders. Whenever the promotion of democracy is mentioned, it is done *within* the context of European integration,<sup>36</sup> and not specifically as a goal to be advanced in its relations with other international actors.

The plan to operationalize this objective differs both in scope and in substance from that of the NSS. While the U.S. strategy (both in 2002 and 2006) is "truly global in its outlook" and takes on "an international mandate to expand the benefits of freedom around the globe,"<sup>37</sup> the ESS' area of concentration is regional, even though the title of the document, "A Secure Europe in a Better World," reflects Europe's aim to make its normative aspirations more prominent. Most importantly, both documents hope to spread democracy (the NSS) and good governance (the ESS) in cooperation with other partners, but while the U.S. relies on a distinct brand of American internationalism that combines values and national interests in order to forge an alliance of freedom-loving nations against terror,<sup>38</sup> the EU's plan is to build an international

order based on effective multilateralism. This strategy is inspired by the the history of EU integration and implies upholding the norms of international law, working within the framework of international institutions like the U.N., and making use of policy instruments related to trade, assistance, and conditionality.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, this reflects the belief that in a globalized world, “there are few problems we can deal with on our own.”<sup>40</sup> In contrast, the NSS is fully confident in the power of America to fulfill its global mission. In other words, while for the EU cooperation is intrinsic to successfully tackling the threats to Europe’s security, for the U.S. cooperation has become instrumentalized and is contingent upon the context in which democracy must be promoted.<sup>41</sup> As previously mentioned, the 2006 NSS declares that while America’s principles are firm, its tactics will vary.

Two further points regarding the ESS are worthy of attention. First, just like the NSS, the European document devotes some space to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, the focus is not on the quintessential role that democracy can play in finding a peaceful settlement, but on the relevance of the Israeli-Palestinian question to the larger problems that haunt the region and on the importance of international cooperation. For Europe, “the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict is a strategic priority” without which “there will be little chance of dealing with the other problems of the Middle East.”<sup>42</sup> To this end, the two-state solution that Europe has long advocated requires a “united effort by the European Union, United States, the United Nations and Russia [all members of the Middle East Quartet], but above all by Israelis and Palestinians.”<sup>43</sup> Secondly, although the ESS mentions intervention only in the context of failing states and as a *potential* option that might be exploited in the future,<sup>44</sup> the final lines of the document refer to the EU-U.S. relationship and declare that “acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a *formidable force for good* [my emphasis] in the world.”<sup>45</sup> Thus, while Europe does not seek to promote good governance and reform in a forceful manner, the military option does not seem to disappear entirely from the toolbox that Europe is intent on having at its disposal if it is to play a greater role in international politics.

### C. Languages of Democracy

When it comes to the promotion of democracy, the NSS and the ESS remain different in both form and content. In the former, democracy is

presented as a universal value that America must defend at all cost. The NSS does not define the concept, but takes for granted the presumption that it enjoys universal validity. In fact, the word “democracy” appears fifty-two times in the 54-page 2006 document; additionally, the word “freedom” appears in eighty instances and “liberty” in twenty-two. Consequently, it is difficult for the reader not to get a sense that far more than being a security strategy, the NSS is in reality a creed, an enumeration of the articles of faith that guide the post-9/11 political agenda of the United States. In contrast, in the ESS the word “democracy” appears three times, the word “freedom” twice, and the concept of *governance* (good, bad, or global) five times in a document about a third the length of the NSS. In terms of language, the ESS is far more technical and, as we have seen in the example of terrorism, its prescriptions are less normative.

One explanation for why this is the case may be that since the EU is a supranational organization of 27 states, it is much more difficult for a particular school of thought to impose a dogmatic understanding of the role democracy plays in tackling the threats confronting the Union. In the U.S., after each election the winning party can translate its political vision into reality without too many structural hindrances, except for the checks and balances enshrined in the Constitution. In contradistinction, policy-making in the EU is a process of constant deliberation and decision by consensus in the European Council, which means that political formulae must be palatable to all member states. Since framing policy in technical terms makes it easier to fulfill this requirement, it is not surprising that the ESS is much more concise and its language less ideological. I will explore whether or not this is a strength in the third section of this essay.

If the difference between the U.S. goal of spreading democracy and the EU’s purpose of spreading good governance seems blurry, the comments of Europe’s CFSP representative, Javier Solana, may give us more insight. According to him, “in the Middle East and elsewhere, democratic change is a long term process” and “to succeed, democratic movements have to be home-grown and adapted to local conditions,” as each society “must find its own path and move forward at its own pace.”<sup>46</sup> What outside actors can do is “to help create a context conducive to political change” and “once change is under way, they can support and reward reformist forces.” This differs sharply from the American notion that while in some cases the U.S. will only lend passive support for the democratic agenda, in others it will push for

immediate change. In addition, Solana believes that a culture of dialogue with regional partners can be more effective than coercion or isolation. He advocates for Europe to use its “sticky” power to “attract, stabilize and transform,” because close cooperation with Middle Eastern countries enables the EU to raise concerns over the direction and speed of political change. On the basis of his experience, Solana writes that, “often a quiet word about the plight of a dissident can have more impact than a high-profile speech.” His philosophy reflects the EU’s complexity as a diplomatic actor that relies primarily on structural foreign policy based on a more general conception of power. This approach focuses on milieu goals and on the capacity of states or entities to “determine the structure, rules and institutions in which other states operate;” it has “real impact only in the long term.”<sup>47</sup> Additionally, in formulating and implementing its policies, the EU separates the discourse of justification (i.e., good governance and the rule of law were responsible for the success of EU integration and should be promoted worldwide) from the discourse of application (the EU should pay attention to the local “color” of the places where these policies are to be implemented).<sup>48</sup> Although the NSS specifies that America’s principles of promoting democracy are firm and only its tactics will vary, as we shall see below this claim can be disputed.

Having analyzed the nature of the security threats delineated by the NSS and the ESS, and the way in which democracy fits within the strategic recommendations of each document both at the level of policy and language, my attention shall now turn to the Israeli-Palestinian context. My aim is to see how this analysis can explain the U.S. and EU reactions to the recent evolution of this conflict.

### **III. Hamas and the Disappointments of Democracy**

At the moment when these pages were freshly written, the political situation in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank was desperate. The unity government formed after the Mecca agreement of February 8, 2007, between Fatah and Hamas, was on the fringes of collapse under the weight of internecine fighting between groups loyal to either party. Forty people had lost their lives and 114 had been wounded.<sup>49</sup> Today the context is equally volatile. The Annapolis summit between Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), which was moderated by American President George W. Bush, ended on December 4, 2007, with the promise that

a Palestinian state alongside Israel would be established by the end of 2008. Yet hardliners on both sides did not pay much attention to this development. A Hamas spokesman declared that Annapolis could never produce the kind of state Palestinians wish for and, meanwhile, security forces loyal to Abu Mazen shot dead a Hamas demonstrator on the West Bank. As for the Israelis, their lack of vocal protest highlighted their skepticism about the plans drawn up in Annapolis.<sup>50</sup>

A key element in understanding why this crisis is so difficult to negotiate is the reaction of the U.S. and EU to the victory of Hamas in the legislative elections of January 25, 2006, and in the municipal elections that were held in three rounds during the year 2005. In this case, democracy brought into government an organization that both the U.S. and EU had blacklisted for terrorism. To further explore the implications of this paradox, this section will first outline the American and European efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East and specifically in the Palestinian territories. Second, I will examine why and how the Hamas victory came about. Third, I will scrutinize the American and European policies adopted in response to this development, as well as discuss their impact for the overall task of advancing democracy and good governance.

### **A. America, Europe, and Middle East Democracy**

I begin with the observation that American programs to spread democracy in the Middle East are designed to operate on three levels: first, there are policy initiatives that support civil society organizations and state institutions with the underlying goal of fostering democratic change. The main American effort in this effort has been the 2002 Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), which was informed by the U.N.'s *Arab Human Development Report*, released earlier that year. According to that publication, the lack of political freedom, the disempowerment of women, and the lack of knowledge are key factors that account for the current state of the Arab world.<sup>51</sup> In addition, the U.S. government announced at the 2004 G-8 summit held in Atlanta, Georgia, the launching of the Broader Middle East and North Africa Partnership Initiative (BMENA). Just like the MEPI, it was programmed with the view of encouraging democratic political reform, economic liberalization, more support for education, and women's rights. The difference is that the BMENA included countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan. For the fiscal year 2005, Congress allocated a total of \$150



million for the MEPI (about \$300 million was originally reserved for four fiscal years) and \$75 million for the BMENA.<sup>52</sup> So far, these programs have sponsored more than 100 projects in fourteen countries.<sup>53</sup> The second level at which the U.S. directs its democracy promotion strategy is that of public diplomacy, as neither President Bush, nor Vice-President Cheney, nor Secretary of State Rice have failed to underscore the vital importance of democracy to U.S. foreign policy.<sup>54</sup> As we have seen, this philosophy is the bedrock of the NSS. Finally, in line with the NSS, the third level of U.S. democracy promotion strategies is that of military intervention, which is presently taking place in Iraq.<sup>55</sup>

For a number of reasons, the case of Palestine is particularly crucial for U.S. democracy promotion efforts. When compared to the approach the U.S. has taken towards countries like Egypt and Jordan (key American allies in the region), the American demand for democratic change has been much more forceful towards the Palestinians and has been articulated in tandem with security objectives.<sup>56</sup> Most importantly, the U.S. has made Palestine a test case for the spread of democracy in the Middle East. In 2002, President Bush declared that, "if liberty can blossom on the rocky soil of the West Bank and Gaza, it will inspire millions around the globe who are equally weary of poverty and oppression" and "equally entitled to the benefits of democratic government."<sup>57</sup> Consequently, until 2006 and Hamas' electoral success, the U.S. was the largest individual donor to the Palestinian Legislative Council, providing training for 80% of Palestinian parliamentarians. American programs focused on consolidating the Palestinian judiciary, providing grants to strengthen citizens' rights, and technical assistance for elections. All these initiatives were channeled through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), as the MEPI has not yet carried out significant programs in the West Bank or Gaza Strip.<sup>58</sup> Financially, this has translated into an overall commitment of \$150 million in the fiscal year 2005, out of which half was appropriated by Congress to USAID projects in Gaza and the West Bank.<sup>59</sup> Also in 2005, following a visit to Washington by Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas, President Bush approved a cash transfer of \$50 million in direct assistance to the PA.<sup>60</sup>

I will turn now to EU strategy. Promoting good governance and reform in the Arab world in general and in the Palestinian Territories in particular illustrate not only the crucial role played by the rule of law within the internal policy framework of the EU, but most importantly the degree to which the experiences of enlargement and integra-

tion inform the Union's course of action. According to Article 11(1) of the Treaty for European Union (TEU), the EU shall "define and implement a common foreign and security policy...the objectives of which shall be to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms."<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Articles 177(2) and 181a(1) of the Treaty for European Community orient the EU's development and economic strategies in the same direction.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, in 1993, the EU established the Copenhagen criteria for membership, which stipulated that functional institutions that guarantee the rule of law and respect for human rights were a *sine qua non* for any country planning for accession. Finally, In 1998, the Union issued a declaration on human rights in which it proclaimed that, "the indivisibility for human rights and the promotion of pluralistic democracy serve as a fundamental basis for action."<sup>63</sup> Thus, an initial observation about the EU's democracy promotion strategies is that from 1992, when the TEU was signed, until 2003, when the European Council adopted the ESS, spreading democracy as a foreign policy objective was gradually replaced with spreading good governance. The following section will delve into some of the reasons that may have triggered this decision.

In 1994, the European Parliament launched the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, which is annually funded at circa 130 million Euros for projects worldwide, of which 10 percent go to countries in the Middle East.<sup>64</sup> In 1995, the EU launched the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), which established a structure for cooperation with twelve countries littoral to the Mediterranean. This program was based on the Barcelona Declaration, which divides cooperation into political, economic, and cultural areas, and is operationalized through association agreements in which signatories are obliged to endorse a human rights clause. From 2000 to 2006, the EMP was allocated one billion Euros.<sup>65</sup> Finally, in 2003, the EU started the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), a new scheme that was clearly inspired by the provisions of the ESS. Its purpose was to promote a "zone of prosperity" around Europe. It was structured in a series of differentiated action plans covering key areas such as political reform, economic development, trade, and justice and home affairs.<sup>66</sup>

The Palestinian Authority was invited to join the ENP in 2003. Under the "democracy and rule of law priorities," the EU and PA agreed to work together on strengthening the legitimacy of the Palestinian Legislative Council, regulating political parties, assisting in local elec-



tions, and making the public administration more transparent.<sup>67</sup> In 2005, the European Commission directed the Union's financial commitments in two areas: (1) "support for the PA, including reforms" (70 million Euros), with Europe being the primary donor in to the Palestinian Financial Management Trust Fund supervised by the World Bank; and (2) "building the institutions of the Palestinian state" (12 million Euros), which mainly focused on creating the conditions for an economic recovery for Gaza and the West Bank.<sup>68</sup>

## **B. Enter Hamas**

The comprehensive programs to promote democracy (and good governance) managed by the U.S. and EU came to a halt in the wake of Hamas' success in the Palestinian elections. To better fathom why this was the case, a minimal discussion of Hamas' identity is required. Created between 1987 and 1993 during the first Intifada in Gaza and the West Bank, Hamas is an offspring of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Article 11 of its Charter proclaims that, "the land of Palestine belongs to future Muslim generations until Judgment Day," while Article 34 insists that liberation from Israel can only be fulfilled by jihad.<sup>69</sup> When the PA was formed in 1994 after the Oslo Accords, Hamas considered it to be an illegitimate body, not least because it was dominated by Fatah, the organization created in the 1950s by Yasir Arafat. Furthermore, Hamas continued the uprising and on April 13, 1994, it carried out its first suicide bombing in the north of Israel, killing eight people.<sup>70</sup> Two years later, Hamas boycotted the PA presidential and legislative elections, which were won by Fatah and Arafat.

In 2000, the second Intifada brought Fatah and Hamas into a relationship of both competition and cooperation. Both organizations supported the unilateral ceasefire that was declared in 2003.<sup>71</sup> One year later, Fatah and Hamas lost their founding figures: both Yasir Arafat and Sheikh Ahmad Yasin died in 2004, the former in a Paris clinic, the latter as a result of Israel's policy of targeted assassinations against leaders of Palestinian terror groups. In fact, by the time Prime Minister Ariel Sharon implemented the unilateral disengagement plan from Gaza in August 2005, most of Hamas' leadership had been annihilated by the Israeli Defense Forces.<sup>72</sup> Following Arafat's death, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) was smoothly elected as PA president. Unlike his predecessor, he adopted a policy of dialogue *vis-à-vis* Hamas, which was also eager to offer a positive response, given that Israel's policies

had severely weakened the movement. Consequently, on March 19, 2005, all Palestinian factions signed the Cairo Declaration in which the unilateral ceasefire was prolonged and pledges were made to start discussions about the integration of Hamas into the PLO. In the eyes of Hamas supporters, this signified that, "many things have changed," for unlike Arafat, Abu Mazen "believes in democracy and has allowed Hamas to become *more and more involved* [my emphasis]."<sup>73</sup>

One of the most crucial decisions taken by Abu Mazen was to postpone the Palestinian legislative elections (which Arafat had promised shortly before his death) to early 2006, and organize the municipal elections throughout 2005 in various rounds. The rationale behind this plan was that given Israel's pullout from Gaza, Hamas had gained considerable prominence and holding the elections on schedule would result in an Islamist victory, with the next Palestinian Prime Minister being a Hamas member. This scenario was unacceptable to Abu Mazen, but most importantly to the American administration, who expected that a postponement would allow enough time for Fatah to consolidate and gain a better position.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, the Palestinian President was certain about the validity of this prognosis and so were American officials. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice declared that, "we have to give Palestinians some room for their the evolution of their political process."<sup>75</sup> Speaking days before the legislative elections were held, an American official bluntly asked himself:

What would we gain by pushing forward for another postponement in the hope that somehow Hamas can be curbed? Six months from now, the PA will not be any stronger, Fatah will be just as divided, nothing will be done about Hamas and our democratization agenda would have been stalled. Elections may not produce anything better, but they won't produce anything worse.<sup>76</sup>

We may note in this assessment a contradiction between the unqualified way in which democracy is presented in the NSS as a "good" of intrinsic value that must be promoted by the U.S. worldwide, versus the instrumental perspective through which the Bush Administration evaluated the possible results from the Palestinian polls.

Contrary to these anticipations, municipal elections were held throughout 2005 and as the January 2006 general elections date approached, Hamas got stronger and stronger, while Fatah's popularity plummeted. By December 2005, Fatah was in disarray. Hamas, on

the other hand, was enjoying a surge in the polls that guaranteed the sympathy of 40 percent of Palestinians. In the first round of municipal elections, Hamas won 26 council seats against 12 for Fatah in the West Bank and seven out of nine in the Gaza Strip. By the third round, this pattern was confirmed.<sup>77</sup> Even Hamas was surprised by its performance, proclaiming that angels must have joined the vote.<sup>78</sup>

Why were Palestinians voting for Hamas? At least three reasons come to mind. First, during the last years of Arafat and even within the period of Abu Mazen's chairmanship, the PA had been perceived largely as a corrupt body. Fatah was running the PA, hence Fatah's association with corruption was unbreakable. Second, there was consensus among the Palestinians that the Oslo Peace Process, led by Fatah, had failed to deliver on its promises, because during the past fifteen years, Israel had maintained colonization and even started building a separation wall.<sup>79</sup> Third, with Abu Mazen's rescheduling of the elections, Hamas gained considerable experience in communicating its political message to the voters. The movement ran under the slogan "Change and Reform." Its organizers became experts at holding rallies and enjoyed a virtual monopoly on campaigning in mosques.<sup>80</sup> Consequently, on January 25, 2006, Hamas won a decisive victory over Fatah and Ismael Haniya became Prime Minister, a position that was first held by Abu Mazen in 2005, when it was created in order to counterweight the Presidency, then occupied by Yasir Arafat.

### **C. A Dream Deferred? America and Europe Respond**

The response to Hamas' electoral triumph was swift and unapologetic. First, Israel rejected from the very beginning the notion that Hamas should be integrated and argued against its participation in the elections on the grounds of the 1995 Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, which banned Hamas from running in 1996. Its provisions stipulated that, "candidates, parties and coalitions...[that] commit or advocate racism, or pursue the implementation by unlawful or undemocratic means" were ineligible to participate in the election.<sup>81</sup> With citizens questioning whether their country should wait passively for an arch-enemy who fights for their destruction to be handed the keys to the Palestinian government,<sup>82</sup> Israel decided to stop the transfer of the monthly \$60 million of tax revenues it collects on behalf of the PA for merchandise destined for Gaza and the West Bank.<sup>83</sup>

The U.S. acted in a similar manner. Economically, it imposed strict guidelines on all Palestinian recipients of American assistance directed by USAID in order to ensure that none goes to Hamas, the Hamas-led PA, or to any group affiliated with the movement, regardless of their record on service delivery or transparency. All Palestinians who receive USAID grants are now obliged to sign an anti-terror certificate, check beneficiaries against published lists of international terrorists, and submit names to further inspection by American government institutions. Moreover, any entities that contained the word “martyr” in their name would be ineligible to receive aid.<sup>84</sup> Any bank that agreed to collaborate with the Hamas-run PA would be blacklisted by the U.S. government.<sup>85</sup> Politically, the response was isolation and the subjection of any further negotiation with Hamas to the conditions enumerated by the Quartet (renunciation of violence, recognition of the state of Israel and of the agreements signed by the PLO).

As for the European Union, although it followed the American example and discontinued direct and indirect donor subventions to the PA’s Single Treasury Account, it did not wholly suspend political relations and was the main driving force behind the creation of the Temporary International Mechanism (TIM). The TIM was set up in June 2006 to channel humanitarian aid to the Palestinians by circumventing the Hamas-led PA. Indeed this was a much needed plan, for the socioeconomic situation in Gaza had severely deteriorated by the end of 2006. According to the United Nations:

the PA fiscal crisis resulted in an estimated decline of more than \$500 million in Palestinian household income in the first half of 2006. As a result, real per-capita consumption levels declined by about 12 percent, with food consumption down by 8 percent...relative to the first half of 2005. *This increased the number of deep poor from an average of 650,800 in second-half 2005, to an average of 1,069,200 in first-half 2006—a 64.3 percent increase [emphasis in the original].* The individual deep poverty rate climbed from 17.3 to 27.5 percent as between the two periods.<sup>86</sup>

By February 2007, after a year of more or less violent interludes between Fatah and Hamas that left Palestinian institutions quasi-paralyzed, the British charity Oxfam concluded that:

Two thirds of Palestinians now live in poverty, a rise of 30 percent last year. The number of families unable to get enough food has risen by 14 percent...The health system is disintegrating...[and] public servants

are worst hit...their poverty rate has risen from 35 percent in 2005, to 71 percent in 2006.<sup>87</sup>

In this context, the EU disbursed circa \$140 million throughout 2006 to the TIM and the European Commission released a report in which it asserted that 80% of the civilian employees of the PA were to receive monthly allowances of \$350.<sup>88</sup> In fact, according to *The Economist*, the humanitarian aid sent to Gaza and the West Bank in 2006 totalled \$1.2 billion, a 10 percent increase from 2005, which worried international development workers because people were becoming more and more dependent on aid.<sup>89</sup> On the political side, despite adopting a similar policy to that of the U.S., the EU was more nuanced in its tone and more pragmatic on the ground, with Israeli officials complaining about low-level meetings between EU consular staff and Hamas members.<sup>90</sup>

#### D. Palestinian Perceptions

With Gaza and the West Bank crumbling under international sanctions, how did Palestinians respond to the U.S. and EU measures? The answer to this question is quite surprising. On the one hand, there was widespread condemnation that the U.S. and EU were being inconsistent in their quest for democratization in the region, and the overall atmosphere was one of hopelessness. Regarding USAID anti-terror certificates, the dean of the Islamic University in Gaza complained that, "the Americans asked us to sign a form opposing terrorism. We said we don't support terror and said send your auditors, but we weren't going to humiliate ourselves."<sup>91</sup> Even USAID officials recognized that the restrictions were not serving their purpose, as they are "self-defeating and just sow bad blood."<sup>92</sup> Indeed, "the morale in Palestine was that the...failure of powerful forces to accept democracy's result causes instability."<sup>93</sup> According to the head of a Bethlehem-based Palestinian NGO, the U.S. and EU were "sending the message that if you want our money, vote for Fatah."<sup>94</sup> A Christian voter voiced his frustration with the Americans and Europeans: "I'm angry with the donors. All their sanctions are doing is weakening the population, not Hamas."<sup>95</sup>

This was indeed true, for as soon as it became clear that the West was going to suspend all aid to the PA, Hamas exploited the situation to garner support. One Hamas activist acknowledged that, "the aid boycott is good for us because though America says it has declared war on terrorism, we say it is a war against Muslims."<sup>96</sup> From his

Israeli prison cell, an Islamist militant lashed out against the donors: they “have ruined our house with their funds—they are the source of our corruption. We don’t need their Euros. We need our dignity.”<sup>97</sup> Perhaps most strikingly, even when the aid came from the TIM, individual recipients in the territories were convinced that it was actually the PA that was responsible for these humanitarian efforts. According to a European diplomat who interviewed TIM civilian beneficiaries, he was unable to convince them that the sums deposited directly into their bank accounts through this scheme were provided by the EU, “because they kept insisting the payments came from the government.”<sup>98</sup>

Moreover, sharp criticisms against the U.S. and EU were voiced in the regional press. The Saudi-Arabian newspaper *Al-Watan* wrote on April 30, 2006, that the way in which the Palestinian people were going to be treated is “the harshest type of political punishment for their democratic choice.”<sup>99</sup> In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood decreed that, “the Western countries are known for their double standards. Domestically, they practice democracy. But abroad, they practice it only to the extent to which it serves their interests.”<sup>100</sup> In Turkey, Prime Minister Recep Tayip Erdogan concluded that, “if the intention was to discipline the new structure in Palestine through economic methods,” this would only bring “controlled democracy, a stance that disregards the Palestinians.”<sup>101</sup>

Nevertheless, in spite of all these accusations against the U.S. and EU, the Palestinians perceived the two donors in different lights. In March 2006, a survey conducted by Near East Consulting revealed that after the decision to suspend aid to the new Hamas-led PA had been taken, 17.1 percent of Palestinians politically trusted the EU and only 1.6 percent trusted the U.S. Moreover, 37 percent believed that the Europeans had a more just policy towards the Palestinians while only 2 percent thought that the U.S. adopted a fairer stance.<sup>102</sup> Even commentators who contest the role of the EU in promoting democracy in the Middle East concluded that, “Europe escaped the opprobrium of America’s democracy promotion efforts.”<sup>103</sup> Hence, we can see that while Europe was subject to the identical criticism as the United States, it managed NOT to fall from grace with the Palestinians. How could this be?

One critical answer reveals itself if we go back to where this essay began, namely, to the comparison of the NSS and ESS, two documents that outline how the United States and European Union perceive the threats to their security and the ways they plan to defend themselves.

In the NSS, America is imperiled by a vicious alliance of terrorists and dictators who seek to use weapons of mass destruction against the free world. To tackle this problem, the U.S. should sustain a vigorous campaign to promote democracy worldwide, for since democratic nations are less likely to go to war against one another, and offer a voice to groups that are otherwise alienated from politics, more democracy means less terrorism and this makes America more secure. Most importantly, democracy is presented as a universal value, a way of life that people in all countries and all cultures would embrace if they were given the opportunity to make a choice. Consequently, in the NSS view, democracy is an axiomatic category, removed from conceptual ambiguity. It is a panacea against the evils that today endanger America.

Yet, as we have seen, when confronted with the practicalities of democracy promotion, these aims become instrumentalized. As the Hamas example demonstrates, fostering democracy can backfire and even collide with the goal of enhancing security. Yes, the Palestinians voted in free and fair elections, but those who won the elections appear to be committed to the destruction of America's allies (in this case Israel). Consequently, the U.S. refuses to cooperate with the popularly elected government in what constitutes a radical departure from the core tenets of the NSS. True, the 2006 version does mention that Hamas must fulfill other criteria to be deemed a legitimate partner by the U.S, but this document was written *after* Hamas won the election and the American position had already been formulated. In the 2002 version, such qualifications are nonexistent. Moreover, the 2006 NSS specifies that America's principles are fixed, but the tactics will vary. Yet even these tactics must display some degree of consistency so they cannot to be misinterpreted as double standards. Clearly, this was not the case.

As for the ESS, the document identified a wider variety of threats and acknowledged the role that democracy plays in containing them. Far from being dogmatic about democracy, however, the ESS is characterized by the predominance of technical terms over ideological formulations. In fact, there is little espousal of any political creed in the document, except for the belief in the role of the EU in making Europe prosperous, peaceful, and free, and of the call for Europe to play a greater role in world politics. Most significantly, the EU's understanding of democracy promotion takes the form of advancing good governance, a term which even though is not exempted from concep-



tual blurriness, is far less politically loaded. Taking this into account together with the much more limited ambit of the EU's area of action—unlike the NSS, the ESS focuses on Europe's immediate vicinity—and the Union's preference for nuance and dialogue over isolation, we may begin to understand why the Palestinians regarded it as a much more trustworthy partner than the United States, even though the EU was subject to the same accusations.

#### **IV. Democracy, Security, Peace?**

If we accept the validity of the argument that how one speaks about promoting democracy as a foreign policy objective plays a central role in determining the flexibility of policy options as well as the way in which they are perceived, it follows that the notion of spreading democracy in the Middle East must be reconsidered on two levels. First, with respect to the U.S., I will dig deeper into the conceptual framework of the NSS and see whether the American failure in Palestine is illustrative of greater policy deficiencies. Regarding the EU, I will examine whether the focus on good governance, which translated into greater popular support, had any impact on the effectiveness of its policies. Second, I will integrate my argument within a broader theoretical dimension and show how this intellectual endeavor has enriched my understanding of globalization, a concept that lies at the heart of Macalester's program in Maastricht. The next section aims to fulfill the first task while the conclusion will respond to the second.

##### **A. Unintended Consequences**

The argument put forward in this essay bears worrisome implications for both the United States and the European Union. For the U.S., it clearly underscores the drawbacks of talking about spreading democracy in a quasi-religious terminology that (1) puts a straitjacket on the flexibility of American policies; (2) is conducive for accusations of inconsistency from those whose lives are supposed to be improved by American efforts; and (3) often leads to confusion about the role of democracy in conflict resolution and state building. This was certainly the case with the Palestinians during the violent struggles of 2006, as both Hamas and Fatah claimed they were fighting for democracy. The former asserted that it was defending its democratically gained mandate against "putchists in league with Washington," while the lat-



ter argued that it was engaged in a struggle to defend the pluralistic nature of society.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, this appears to be the result of a major shortcoming in American neoconservative thinking, namely, the juxtaposition of the lessons from one particular (though very important) historical period to a wholly different one on the grounds of their universality: if democracy was quintessential to the American victory in the Cold War over the Soviets, democracy could also save the world from terrorism and if promoted in the Middle East and elsewhere, it would increase America's security. As one scholar noted (and as the previous section has shown), "the problem with this conception is that it ignores the possibility that democratization in the Arab world may have a number of outcomes unpalatable to the U.S."<sup>105</sup> Indeed, this has happened in the past in other parts of the world and is now happening in Palestine. In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration put much effort in setting up the infrastructure for a credible election in El Salvador, but also covertly funneled money to its protégé, Jose Napoleon Duarte, to make sure he was victorious.<sup>106</sup> Similarly, in 2006 in Gaza and the West Bank, the U.S.—like the EU—did not attempt to push for conditions for Hamas' participation in the polls for fear of being accused of thwarting democracy. Instead they concentrated on the post-election reality and underscored that cooperation with Hamas would only take place under strict observation of the Quartet's criteria.<sup>107</sup> What these two examples have in common is that in both cases democracy is presented as an end (just like in the NSS), but the way in which the U.S. acted made it just look like an instrument in America's panoply of foreign policy tools.

## **B. More Democracy = More Security?**

The proposition that democracy makes America (or any other country) more secure can be challenged not only on theoretical grounds, but also on empirical ones. The NSS argues that incorporation into a democratic polity will resolve the causes that lead young people in oppressed societies to join terrorist groups. But this claim does not seem to survive the test of history. First, as examples from Turkey, Jordan, and Israel illustrate, armed groups can be integrated into the political system only if a strong imbalance of power on the domestic political stage ensures sufficient checks and balances to dissuade such movements from resorting to violence.<sup>108</sup> In the absence of political constraints, electoral legitimacy does not translate into pacifist politics.

Second, a brief glance at the list of terrorist acts annually published by the U.S. government shows no correlation between the number of attacks and the nature of the political systems in which they were perpetrated. According to the State Department's annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, of the major terror incidents that occurred worldwide between 2000 and 2003, 269 happened in countries classified as "free" by Freedom House, 119 in countries that were "partly free," and 138 in states considered "not free."<sup>109</sup> In addition, of the terror acts that occurred in free states, India, the world's largest democracy, accounted for 203 (75 percent), in contrast to China, the world's most populated authoritarian state, which did not have a single act on the list.<sup>110</sup>

### **C. Prompting Democracy = Promoting Regime Change?**

A further point that illustrates the conceptual ambiguity created by making democracy promotion a national security objective is the extent to which it becomes confused with regime change. This pitfall was signalled both by academics and by practitioners. According to Thomas Carothers, "regime change policies in which the U.S. government seeks to oust foreign governments hostile to U.S. interests, whether through military force [as with Saddam Hussein in Iraq] or economic pressure [as with Hamas?] fail to gain international legitimacy and contaminate democracy promotion" when they are presented as efforts on behalf of democratization.<sup>111</sup> Gareth Evans, former Australian Foreign Minister, argues that in promoting democracy, "modesty is the best policy."<sup>112</sup> Specifically, this means not including the spread of democracy in a country's National Security Strategy, especially "if it involves regime change: it is particularly counterproductive for those democrats around the region trying to work for change from within."<sup>113</sup>

### **D. Good Governance and Double Standards**

In comparison to the NSS, we have seen that the ESS barely mentions democracy and instead focuses on good governance. On the one hand, this has meant that Palestinians have a better impression of the EU, which in their eyes appears a more just international actor than the U.S. On the other hand, they have also criticized the Union for the same reasons, namely, double standards and inconsistency.<sup>114</sup> Are these accusations legitimate? The answer is both yes and no. As shown in the ESS, the EU never spoke about promoting democracy in the same canonical

language as the United States and was more inclined toward dialogue with the Palestinians, who viewed it as a more reliable partner. However, commentators speculate that the reason for this choice was not necessarily the realization that a more modest tone is a better policy, but the conviction that promoting stability is a much more precious goal. This is because spreading democracy may result in the short-run in political turmoil. Since this would take place around Europe's borders, it would imperil the Union's security.<sup>115</sup> Thus, the original impetus for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (and to a large extent for the 2003 launched ENP) was less about spurring reform than about boosting security, as "money flowed to buy stability rather than lay the groundwork for change."<sup>116</sup>

### E. Good Governance, Democracy, and Stability

The way in which the U.S. and EU approach the contradiction between democracy and stability reveals another difference between them. On the one hand, the U.S. opted in favor of the former, as Secretary of State Rice condemned the past American option in favor of the latter. Speaking at the American University in Cairo, she declared that, "for sixty years, my country, the United States, pursued stability at the expense of democracy in this region, here in the Middle East—and we achieved neither. Now we are taking a different course. We are supporting the democratic aspirations of all people."<sup>117</sup> As we have seen, this assertion is as difficult to operationalize as it is easy to contest. On the other hand, the ESS clearly states that in the age of globalization, geography still counts. Therefore, the EU's accent on stability is conditioned by a factor that for the US is irrelevant: proximity.<sup>118</sup> As a result, Europe may have deliberately chosen to speak the language of good governance, which is far less suspicious of political *arriere pensées* that betray plans to enact regime change. Finally, it may well be the case that EU policymakers have realized it might be difficult for the Union to seek to advance democracy when it itself cannot be conceived as such.<sup>119</sup>

Setting the issue of democracy promotion aside, how effective has Europe been at promoting good governance, the stated goal of the ESS? In this particular instance, the accusations of inconsistency do not ring hollow. According to Richard Youngs, the EU's decision to follow the U.S. and suspend aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian government contradicted its own policy of pressing for a more parliamentary style of government in the Palestinian territories by switching its support

from the legislature to the President, Abu Mazen.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, the TIM bypasses good governance mechanisms such as the Palestinian Single Treasury Account and “diplomats complain of money draining ‘in a black hole.’”<sup>121</sup> In the words of a former Palestinian Interior Minister, “the Europeans have transformed transparency and accountability into a sacred principle, but this is happening under their noses and with their support and they say nothing.”<sup>122</sup> Consequently, we come to the paradoxical conclusion that while Europe’s emphasis on good governance and lack of dogmatism has made it seem more dependable in the eyes of Palestinians, its record is not a promising one.

## **V. Link with Globalization and Conclusion**

I started this essay with the motivation that examining American and European policies to promote democracy is a good way to assess the extent to which they will adopt similar positions on issues such as Iraq in the future. Though the particular nature of the problems (and that of the people whose job it will be to solve them) will always be a deciding factor in determining whether the U.S. and EU stand side by side, this study detects some underlying patterns. On the one hand, the NSS and the American government’s reaction to Hamas’ victory illustrates that the U.S. advances democracy as a universal good and perceives this effort to be in direct correlation with bolstering the security of the American people. The previous sections explored the drawbacks of this approach, which in the case of Palestine resulted in a loss of credibility. On the other hand, the EU speaks less about spreading democracy and underscores the importance of good governance. This policy option has yielded mixed results: yes, Europe is regarded as a more sincere partner by the Palestinians, but its record on advancing good governance is quite inconsistent and may be the result of a deliberate calculation to favor stability over change. This shows that how one speaks about promoting democracy or good governance matters, and a more flexible stance offers more policy options. In this last section, I relate these insights to the concept of globalization, which was explored in depth in the January seminar and throughout the duration of the Maastricht program.

## A. After Theory, Empirics

There are a number of ways in which this project has enhanced my knowledge of globalization. First, researching how America and Europe think about promoting democracy has added an empirical component to the definitions of this concept that were explored during the January seminar. For instance, we learned that Nederveen Pieterse likens globalization to a prism in which major disputes over the collective human condition, such as questions of capitalism, inequality, power, development, and identity, are refracted.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, the NSS and ESS, as well as the way in which American and European policymakers reacted to Hamas' electoral victory, reflect efforts to grapple with a variety of dilemmas about human existence which confirm the validity of Pieterse's argument. Among them, the following three interrogations emerge as prominent:

- *Are there such things as universal values?* For the United States, the guarantee of democracy as the sole political system that can ensure a happy and secure life is unequivocal. As shown above, nowhere do American policymakers question this tenet or the way it might be understood by people with different political cultures. On the other hand, we can speculate that the EU's choice to promote good governance over democracy reflects that the Union is more cognizant of the fact that such an enterprise can lead to controversy, and that a more technical policy formulation can avoid this pitfall.
- *How does one relate to history?* America and Europe have developed different answers to this quandary, which appear to be correlated with their power status in the world. The NSS reveals that the U.S. is fully aware of its unparalleled position of strength in the world and plans to exploit it in order to advance its own political vision. In this sense, the document reveals that the current American administration is convinced the U.S. must choose *either* make history *or* "be made" by history (a possibility that is equated with decline). In contrast, the ESS has a regional scope and is focused primarily on securing a stable environment in which Europe can prosper. History is something to be made only *if* Europe manages to translate its "presence" in world politics into greater "actorness" (i.e., enhancing the coherence and consistency of the EU's external relations), a position that explains why the ESS is much more limited in its goals and ambit.

- *What is the relationship between agency, structure, and change?* This was a recurrent question in the January seminar as a feature of the globalization debate and it is also a *leitmotif* in this analysis. On the one hand, American policymakers hold that democracy is good for everyone and the NSS stipulates that in certain cases the United States will actively promote democracy, even in a forceful manner. The corollary of this argument is that this political system can take root in any context, regardless of a people's cultural and historical inheritance. In other words, agency can modify structure. But as I have documented, the case of Hamas puts this argument into question. On the other hand, the EU seems to be less enthusiastic about the role of external agency in implementing democratic change in the Middle East. As shown in Section I, Javier Solana, the EU's foreign policy representative, is of the view that each society evolves according to its own rhythm and that the way external powers can influence this process is through advice, guidance, and dialogue, rather than fostering disruptive change.

All of these examples confirm Piertese's definition of globalization as a theoretical locus of grand debates about morals and society because they show that in thinking about how to defend their citizens, policymakers must now tackle a variety of concerns that go far beyond immediate security requirements.

## **B. The Globalization of Security**

While studying the NSS and ESS, I became more aware of the degree to which the notion of globalization and the realities it encompasses have become a matter of interest in areas of human activity that are very different from academia. In Section I, this essay showed how the plans to promote democracy and good governance evolved as a response to certain conceptions of the world, which then led policymakers to believe that spreading democracy or good governance would be conducive to greater security. The way in which they perceive globalization is central to understanding why this has been the case, as both the 2006 NSS and the ESS make specific references to the concept. The NSS document contains a chapter in which it explicitly recognizes that, "new flows of trade, investment, information and technology are transforming national security" because "globalization has exposed us to new challenges and changed the way old challenges touch our [American]

interests and values.”<sup>124</sup> Some of these new provocations include pandemics, environmental degradation, and illicit trade, but the NSS still holds that, “democracies are better able to deal with these challenges than repressive or poorly governed states.”<sup>125</sup> For example, “pandemics require fully transparent public health systems which those that fear freedom are unable or unwilling to provide.”<sup>126</sup> In contrast to the idealistic formulations of the NSS, the ESS is more concrete. As outlined in Section I, it underscores that even in the era of globalization, geography still matters,<sup>127</sup> and that it is simultaneously applauded as a bestower of prosperity and condemned as a source of frustration and injustice.<sup>128</sup> These different viewpoints about the impact of globalization have made me more conscious of the added value that studying this phenomenon has brought to my education and of the ways in which this knowledge can be applied in a specific professional context.

### **C. The Impossibility of Isolation**

The third lesson that I drew from this project is a corollary of the one above: if security has become globalized to such an extent that American and European officials now have to confront issues that surpass traditional thinking, it follows that endeavors which do not consider the implications of globalization will most likely end in failure. This argument was previously examined during the winter seminar, when we learned from Anthony Giddens’ work that globalization can be characterized as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”<sup>129</sup> American and European approaches to promote democracy and good governance confirm this argument. Indeed, it is truly remarkable to see how much of the substance of both the NSS and ESS documents is dedicated to developments that are taking place outside of America and Europe—in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Somalia, or North Korea. This reminds us of David Held’s prescient observation that, “our world is [becoming one] of overlapping communities of fate, where the fate of one country and that of another are more entwined than ever before.”<sup>130</sup> The fact that this essay is concentrating on American and European efforts to advance democracy in Palestine is an example of this reality.



#### D. Globalization and Empathy (or lack thereof?)

Realizing that globalization has made American and European security largely dependent on the security of other countries or regions has not necessarily translated into a greater readiness to subject the core assumptions that inform U.S. and EU policies to dialogue with foreign partners. This seems to be true especially in the case of America's NSS, which in spite of the clear recognition that the U.S. needs to cooperate with other countries with the view of prompting democracy and fighting terror, it does not acknowledge that what is meant by democracy in the U.S. and how others may conceptualize it can in fact cause disagreements. This position stands in contradiction to the central argument put forward by Peter Singer in his volume entitled, *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*. According to Singer, the age of globalization requires a new ethical approach to human relations because various developments in law, economics, and the environment are gradually creating a global community whose problems must be addressed on the basis of common norms.<sup>131</sup> In other words, Singer's work can be interpreted as a call for empathy in communication, which in the context of this essay would mean that American policymakers should cultivate a much greater "respect for the opinions of mankind" in their efforts to promote democracy. True, this prescription could be countered on the grounds that their (legitimate) aim is to serve *only* the national interest of the U.S. Yet even from a strategic perspective, this essay has shown that the way in which Palestinians reacted to America's democracy promotion policies in the wake of Hamas' electoral victory reveals that a greater preoccupation with understanding diverging viewpoints and exercising "soft power" may increase political capital. The EU seems to have learned this lesson, as its more nuanced attitude *vis-à-vis* Hamas meant that Palestinians perceived it as a more trustworthy partner.

#### E. A Final Word: Globalization and "Belongingness"

At the conclusion of the winter seminar on Globalization in Comparative Perspective, I realized that although I had lived in Europe for most of my life, spending some formative years in the United States had disconnected me from the place I thought I called home. This feeling caught me off guard. Claiming that part of my experience in Maastricht became oriented toward the rediscovery of Europe does not appear to me as a presumptuous assertion. Writing this essay was thus



an important step in making this endeavor fulfilling because apart from the academic work, it also offered me the opportunity to confront my images of America and Europe simultaneously, and revisit my sentiments about their roles in the world. In this sense, it was for the first time that I became *fully aware* of the European Union's complexity as a political entity and that the destiny of my country, Romania, will be dramatically affected by the EU's future evolution. Thus, one last lesson about globalization that I take with me is that in a time when we are increasingly exposed to different cultures, when our values and identities are swinging between hybridism and the rejection of the *other*, understanding globalization is a difficult task without exploring more profoundly one's own search for belonging. ●

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## Notes

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2. One may reasonably argue that this lesson was originally brought to light by the decolonization movements, which started in the late 1940s and continued through the 1970s. However, since the context of this essay is limited to the scope of EU-U.S. relations, the Cold War is the most significant historical reference point to start discussing American and European approaches towards democratization.
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7. European Commission 2006.
8. Dobriansky 2005.
9. Gnessoto 2003.
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11. Duke 2004, p. 462.
12. National Security Council 2002).
13. Duke 2004, p. 462.
14. National Security Council 2002, p. 14.
15. National Security Council 2006.
16. Duke 2004, p. 465.
17. National Security Council 2006, p. 10.
18. European Council 2003, p. 1.
19. Ibid.

20. Duke 2004, p. 463.
21. European Council 2003, p. 4.
22. European Council 2003, p. 10.
23. Duke 2004, p. 466.
24. National Security Council 2002.
25. National Security Council 2006.
26. Ibid., p. 3.
27. Ibid., pp. 10–11.
28. Ibid., p. 6.
29. National Security Council 2002, p. 9.
30. National Security Council 2006, p. 5.
31. European Council 2003, p. 7.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid., p. 8
34. National Security Council 2006, p. 1.
35. European Council 2003, p. 10.
36. Ibid., p. 6.
37. Duke 2004, p. 468.
38. Ibid.
39. European Council 2003, pp. 9–10.
40. Ibid., p. 13.
41. Rickli 2004, p. 57.
42. European Council 2003, p. 8.
43. Ibid.
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45. Ibid., p. 13.
46. Solana 2005.
47. Keukeleire 2003, p. 47.
48. Sjursen 2006, p. 243.
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50. Ibid., 4 December 2007.
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53. Ibid., p. 965.
54. Ibid., p. 964.
55. Ibid., p. 965.
56. Dalacoura 2004, p. 969.
57. Schmidt and Braizat 2006, p. 12.
58. Ibid., p. 14.
59. Sharp 2006, p. 2.

60. Ibid., p. 4.
61. Baracani 2004, p. 7.
62. Ibid.
63. Smith 2004, p. 37.
64. Yacoubian 2004, p. 4.
65. Ibid., pp. 4–5).
66. Ibid., p. 9. A detailed account of the objectives, incentives, and conditions under the ENP is found in the work of Baracani 2004, p. 27.
67. Baracani 2004, p. 29.
68. Schmidt and Braizat 2006, p. 13.
69. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 19.
70. Ibid., pp. 1–2.
71. Ibid., p. 3.
72. Ibid., p. 17.
73. Ibid., pp. 4–5.
74. Ibid., p. 10.
75. Herzog 2006, p. 3.
76. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 10.
77. Ibid., p. 8.
78. Ibid., p. 9.
79. Zayyad 2006, p. 108.
80. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 8.
81. Ibid., p. 15.
82. Ibid, p. 9.
83. International Crisis Group 2007, p. 2.
84. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 23.
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86. International Crisis Group 2007, p. 3.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid., p. 5.
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91. Ibid., p. 24.
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94. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 32.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. Ibid., p. 13.
98. International Crisis Group 2007, p. 6.

99. Brown 2006, p. 5.
100. Ibid.
101. Schmidt and Braizat, 2006, p.18.
102. Ibid., p. 16.
103. Youngs 2006, p. 6.
104. International Crisis Group 2007, p. 13.
105. Dalacoura 2006, p. 975.
106. Carothers 2004, p. 6.
107. International Crisis Group 2006, p. 30.
108. Herzog 2006, p. 5.
109. Gause 2005, p. 3.
110. Ibid.
111. Carothers 2006, p. 3.
112. Evans 2006, p. 3.
113. Ibid.
114. Youngs 2007.
115. Yacoubian 2004, p. 7.
116. Ibid.
117. Menotti 2006, p. 5.
118. Schmidt and Braizat 2006, p. 7.
119. Hobsbawm 2004; Smith 2006, p. 40.
120. Youngs 2006, p. 3.
121. Youngs, 2007, p. 4.
122. International Crisis Group 2007, p. 6.
123. Van Boxem 2007.
124. National Security Council 2006, p. 47.
125. Ibid.
126. Ibid.
127. European Council 2003, p. 7.
128. Ibid., p. 2.
129. Van Boxem 2007.
130. Samatar 2007.
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